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ABSTRACT

This essay offers several propositions related to the problems of urban areas and notes the implications of these problems for urban universities and their colleges of education. The quality of life in urban America is deteriorating as is the quality of service being provided by urban schools and social service agencies. A large portion of the U.S. population lives in cities and because of this, institutions of higher learning, which historically have failed to respond adequately to the problems of urban America, must focus more attention on the needs of cities. Colleges of education in urban settings must renew their commitment to improving the quality of public education in the cities. The future vitality of the colleges of education also rest in their ability to respond to the needs of an emerging "human service society". Because the U.S. is moving more and more into a mixed economy with a greater role of human service work and the consumption of those services, new forms of educational delivery systems will be necessary. The new kind of educator who is needed will be a generalist in the human relations field, capable of assisting the people in their pursuit of mental and physical health, education and welfare services, and a variety of other human needs. This projection suggests a need to redirect and broaden the role of colleges of education. They should assume the responsibility for training "human service educators" for employment in a variety of settings. In addition to carrying out their teaching and service obligations, colleges of education will need to take greater responsibility for systematic research related to urban social and educational problems. (Author/AM)

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HUMAN SERVICES IN THE URBAN SCENE:
AN EMERGING ROLE FOR TEACHER EDUCATORS

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HUMAN SERVICES IN THE URBAN SCENE: AN EMERGING ROLE FOR TEACHER EDUCATORS

AMERICA HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED FROM A RURAL SOCIETY TO A PRE-DOMINANTLY URBAN ONE, AND THE CITY HAS BECOME THE DOMINANT MODE OF EXISTENCE FOR MOST AMERICANS. THE EXPANSION OF OUR URBAN CENTERS HAS RESULTED IN SIGNIFICANT SOCIAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL PROBLEMS THAT PRESENT CHALLENGES FOR THE SOCIAL SERVICE INSTITUTIONS WHICH SERVE URBAN DWELLERS.

THIS ESSAY OFFERS SEVERAL PROPOSITIONS RELATED TO THE PROBLEMS OF OUR CITIES AND THE IMPLICATIONS OF THESE PROBLEMS FOR URBAN UNIVERSITIES AND THEIR COLLEGES OF EDUCATION.

PROPOSITION #1 - THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN URBAN AMERICA IS DETERIORATING AS IS THE QUALITY OF SERVICE BEING PROVIDED BY URBAN SCHOOLS AND SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCIES.

PROPOSITION #2 - OUR NATION'S COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES WHICH HISTORICALLY HAVE FAILED TO RESPOND ADEQUATELY TO THE NEEDS OF URBAN AMERICA MUST FOCUS MORE ATTENTION ON THE PEOPLE AND PROBLEMS OF OUR CITIES.

PROPOSITION #3 - COLLEGES OF EDUCATION, PARTICULARLY THOSE LOCATED IN OUR CITIES, SHOULD MAKE A MAJOR COMMITMENT TO ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF URBAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS.

PROPOSITION #4 - THE FUTURE VITALITY OF COLLEGES OF EDUCATION MAY REST IN THEIR ABILITY TO RESPOND TO THE NEEDS OF AN EMERGING "HUMAN SERVICE SOCIETY."

EACH PROPOSITION NEEDS FURTHER EXPLANATION AND DISCUSSION.

PROPOSITION #1 - THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN URBAN AMERICA IS DETERIORATING AS IS THE QUALITY OF SERVICE BEING PROVIDED BY URBAN SCHOOLS AND SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCIES.

IN HIS MESSAGE TO THE CONGRESS IN 1968, THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES SAID: "TODAY AMERICAN CITIES ARE IN A CRISIS. THIS CLEAR AND URGENT WARNING RISES FROM THE DECAY OF THE DECADES - AND IS AMPLIFIED FROM THE HARSH REALITIES OF THE PRESENT."¹ UNFORTUNATELY, THIS DESCRIPTION OF THE STATE OF OUR CITIES IS AS ACCURATE TODAY AS IT WAS TEN YEARS AGO. URBAN CENTERS STILL ARE FACED WITH: HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY; STRAINED RACIAL RELATIONSHIPS; MARGINAL HEALTH CARE; SUBSTANDARD HOUSING; INCREASING CRIME AND VIOLENCE; TRAFFIC CONGESTION, POLLUTION, WATER SHORTAGES, AND POWER FAILURES; AND INADEQUATE SYSTEMS OF PUBLIC EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES. THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN OUR CITIES TODAY IS FOR MANY URBAN DWELLERS FAR BELOW WHAT MOST AMERICANS CONSIDER AN ACCEPTABLE STANDARD.

THE MISFORTUNES OF OUR CITIES ARE REFLECTED IN THE PROBLEMS OF THEIR SCHOOLS AND SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCIES. URBAN SCHOOL SYSTEMS ARE IN TROUBLE. THEY ARE UNDERFUNDED AND UNDERSTAFFED, RIDDLED WITH DISRUPTION AND RACIAL CONFLICT, AND ARE UNDER ATTACK BECAUSE YOUNGSTERS CAN'T READ, WRITE, AND COMPUTE. PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATORS ARE BEING ASKED TO BE TEACHER, COUNSELOR, PARENT, AND POLICEMAN, AND APPARENTLY ARE UNABLE TO DO ANY OF THESE THINGS VERY WELL.

SIMILAR PROBLEMS CONFRONT URBAN SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCIES WHICH ARE OVERWHELMED BY PEOPLE IN NEED OF DIVERSE HUMAN SERVICES NOT READILY AVAILABLE AT A HIGH LEVEL OF QUALITY. UNEMPLOYMENT LINES ARE LONG, THE NUMBER OF JUVENILE OFFENDERS IS INCREASING, MORE AND MORE PEOPLE ARE ON WELFARE, AND PUBLIC HEALTH CLINICS ARE OVER

LOADED WITH PEOPLE IN NEED OF INCREASINGLY MORE EXPENSIVE MEDICAL CARE. THE HUMAN NEEDS OF URBAN AMERICA APPEAR GREATER THAN OUR SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCIES SEEM CAPABLE OF RESPONDING TO.

THIS LIMITED LIST OF THE PROBLEMS FACING URBAN AMERICA PARTIALLY DESCRIBES THE PROCESS OF DECAY THAT IS CONSUMING MANY OF OUR CITIES.

PROPOSITION #2 - OUR NATION'S COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES WHICH HISTORICALLY HAVE FAILED TO RESPOND ADEQUATELY TO THE PROBLEMS OF URBAN AMERICA MUST FOCUS MORE ATTENTION ON THE PEOPLE AND PROBLEMS OF OUR CITIES.

IN A MAJOR STUDY OF URBAN HIGHER EDUCATION, THE CARNEGIE COMMISSION REPORTED THAT:

"OUR PEOPLE AND OUR PROBLEMS ARE IN THE CITIES, YET MOST OF AMERICA'S COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES ARE NOT. HISTORICALLY, AMERICA'S COLLEGES HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED IN RURAL SETTINGS FAR REMOVED FROM DISTRACTIONS OF URBAN LIFE. WHILE NEARLY 75% OF OUR PEOPLE LIVE IN URBAN AREAS, ONLY 40% OF THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION EXIST THERE. THE FACT THAT SO MANY OF OUR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES ARE FOUND OUTSIDE OF METROPOLITAN AREAS REFLECTS THE PREDOMINANTLY RURAL ORIENTATION OF AMERICAN HIGHER EDUCATION. EVEN MANY OF OUR UNIVERSITIES THAT HAVE FROM THEIR INCEPTION RESIDED IN OUR CITIES HAVE FAILED TO ADOPT A DISTINCTIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE URBAN SCENE THAT SURROUNDS THEM. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF A FEW, MOST URBAN UNIVERSITIES HAVE CHOSEN TO INSULATE THEMSELVES FROM THEIR URBAN NEIGHBORS WHO SO DESPERATELY NEED THEM."²

THE CARNEGIE COMMISSION FURTHER SUGGESTED THAT:

"THE URBAN UNIVERSITY OF TOMORROW MUST RELATE TO THE CITY IN SEVERAL WAYS. IN SERVING URBAN STUDENTS, IN TRAINING FOR NEW OCCUPATIONS RELATED TO THE NEEDS OF THE CITY, PROVIDING GENERAL UNDERSTANDING TO STUDENTS AND THE PUBLIC ABOUT THE FUTURE OF URBAN CIVILIZATION AND IN CONDUCTING RESEARCH WITH INDIVIDUAL FACULTY MEMBERS AND STUDENTS, THE HOSPITALS, THE SCHOOLS, AND BEING A NEIGHBOR LIVING IN THE SAME ENVIRONMENT AND ACTING AS AN EMPLOYER OF LOCAL CITIZENS."³

OUR CITIES AND URBAN UNIVERSITIES HAVE COMMON CONCERNS AND BOTH HAVE VALUABLE RESOURCES. THE TWO POTENTIALLY COULD WORK TOGETHER TO THEIR MUTUAL BENEFIT. A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THEM COULD OFFER TO BOTH THE OPPORTUNITY TO RESPOND TO THE REAL HUMAN NEEDS OF URBAN AMERICA.

PROPOSITION #3 - COLLEGES OF EDUCATION, PARTICULARLY THOSE LOCATED IN OUR CITIES, SHOULD MAKE A MAJOR COMMITMENT TO ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF URBAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS.

IF SERVING URBAN POPULATIONS AND ADDRESSING URBAN PROBLEMS IS THE WAY OF THE FUTURE FOR URBAN UNIVERSITIES IN GENERAL, IT ALSO OFFERS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR URBAN COLLEGES OF EDUCATION. THE PROBLEMS OF OUR URBAN PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEMS ARE SO APPARENT THAT IT IS UNNECESSARY TO DESCRIBE THEM IN DETAIL.

A RECENT ISSUE OF TIME MAGAZINE HIGHLIGHTED THE FACT THAT OUR HIGH SCHOOLS ARE UNDER FIRE. REFERRING TO OUR HIGH SCHOOLS, TIME STATED THAT "EVEN OUTSIDE THE BIG CITIES, THERE IS TROUBLE EVERYWHERE." PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN OUR SCHOOLS HAS BEEN SHAKEN BY DECLINING PERFORMANCE, RISING VIOLENCE, SPREADING SHUTDOWNS, TEACHER

TROUBLES, AND MOUTING ABSENTEEISM.⁴

THESE CONDITIONS MUST BE CORRECTED AND TEACHER EDUCATORS SHOULD PLAY A MAJOR ROLE. COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN URBAN SETTINGS MUST RENEW THEIR COMMITMENT TO IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF PUBLIC EDUCATION IN OUR CITIES. THEY SHOULD ASSUME THAT THE SCOPE OF THEIR RESPONSIBILITY STRETCHES FROM PRESCHOOL THROUGH ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION TO POSTSECONDARY AND ADULT EDUCATION. COLLEGES OF EDUCATION SHOULD TRAIN EDUCATIONAL SPECIALISTS, INCLUDING TEACHERS, COUNSELORS, AND ADMINISTRATORS, PREPARED TO WORK EFFECTIVELY WITH STUDENTS OF ALL AGES AND DIVERSE ETHNIC, RACIAL, AND CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS.

COLLEGES OF EDUCATION ALSO SHOULD PLACE GREATER EMPHASIS ON THE IN-SERVICE NEEDS OF URBAN EDUCATORS CURRENTLY ON THE FIRING LINE. STEVEN HORN, PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT SAN DIEGO, CONCLUDES THAT:

"WHILE PRESERVICE OPPORTUNITIES ARE DECLINING IN SOME FIELDS, SUCH AS EDUCATION OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY TEACHERS, IN-SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES ARE NOW GREATER THAN EVER. THIS IS ESPECIALLY TRUE AS URBAN AMERICA UNDERGOES THE THROWS OF PUBLIC SCHOOL DESEGREGATION, A CONSTITUTIONALLY REQUIRED PROCESS THAT MUST BE MADE TO WORK. IT HAS WORKED WHERE THERE HAS BEEN THE PROPER EDUCATION OF ADMINISTRATORS, TEACHERS, COUNSELORS, SUPPORT STAFF, BUT MOST COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES HAVE HAD VERY LITTLE TO OFFER IN THE REEDUCATION OF PUBLIC SCHOOL ESTABLISHMENT TO COPE WITH THE CHALLENGES POSED BY THE CHILD WHO LIVES IN A BILINGUAL SETTING OR ATTENDS SCHOOL IN A MULTI-RACIAL, MULTI-ETHNIC ENVIRONMENT."⁵

COLLEGES OF EDUCATION MUST COMMIT THEMSELVES TO TRAINING URBAN EDUCATORS AND TO INCREASING OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE CULTURE OF THE CITY AND ITS SCHOOLS, THE PROCESSES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING IN SUCH A SETTING, AND THE DYNAMICS OF LEADERSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION IN URBAN SCHOOL SYSTEMS.

PROPOSITION #4 - THE FUTURE VITALITY OF COLLEGES OF EDUCATION MAY REST IN THEIR ABILITY TO RESPOND TO THE NEEDS OF AN EMERGING "HUMAN SERVICE SOCIETY."

OUR NATION GRADUALLY IS SHIFTING FROM A PREDOMINANTLY PRODUCTION-ORIENTED ECONOMY TO A MIXED ECONOMY IN WHICH HUMAN SERVICES ARE BECOMING INCREASINGLY MORE IMPORTANT.

SEVERAL PROMINENT SOCIAL SCIENTISTS HAVE COMMENTED ON THIS SIGNIFICANT TREND. BELL, FOR EXAMPLE, BELIEVES THAT WE ARE WITNESSING GROWTH OF A PROFESSIONAL CLASS WHICH WORKS IN THE "NON-PROFIT SECTOR, INCLUDING EDUCATORS, MEDICAL HEALTH SPECIALISTS, SOCIAL SCIENCES, MENTAL HEALTH WORKERS, GOVERNMENTAL EMPLOYEES, AND MEDIA PERSONNEL. HE PREDICTS A SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN NON-PROFIT HUMAN SERVICES DURING THE 70'S AND IN THE SIX TO TEN MILLION PROFESSIONALS PRESENTLY ACTIVE IN THE FIELD. BELL MAINTAINS THAT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRY, THERE IS A NECESSARY EXPANSION OF CONSUMER SERVICES AND RELATED EXPANSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS CONSCIOUSNESS. PEOPLE EXPECT A HIGHER STANDARD OF LIVING, AND THEN GROWING WEARY OF MATERIAL PRODUCTS, THEY BEGIN TO PURSUE AND IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE - AS MEASURED BY THE SERVICES AND AMENITIES IN HEALTH, EDUCATION, RECREATION AND THE ARTS.⁶ GARTNER AND REISMAN CONCLUDE THAT "AS THE U.S. MOVES MORE AND MORE INTO A MIXED ECONOMY WITH A

GREATER ROLE FOR HUMAN SERVICE WORK AND CONSUMPTION OF THOSE SERVICES, NEW FORMS OF EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION, DELIVERY SYSTEMS, AND TEACHING PROCEDURES WILL BE NECESSARY.⁷

PROFESSORS NASH AND DURCHARME OF THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT HAVE SUGGESTED THAT THESE CHANGES IN WORKING AND LIVING HAVE IMPORTANT IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE ROLE OF TEACHER EDUCATORS. NASH AND DURCHARME ARGUE THAT THE FUTURE OF COLLEGES OF EDUCATION RESTS IN THEIR ABILITY TO RESPOND TO THE NEEDS OF THIS EMERGING "HUMAN SERVICE SOCIETY."⁸ THEY CONCLUDE THAT:

"A NEW KIND OF EDUCATOR WILL BE NEEDED DURING THE REMAINING DECADES OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY. THIS EDUCATOR WILL BE DEDICATED TO IMPROVING THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF HUMAN SERVICES, BOTH IN AND OUT OF CLASSROOMS. HE WILL BE A GENERALIST IN HUMAN RELATION FIELD, MORE CONCERNED WITH ASSISTING LARGE PROPORTIONS OF THE POPULATION IN THEIR PURSUIT OF MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE SERVICES, THAN IN LIFE LONG MASTERY AT ONE SPECIFIC TECHNOLOGY (SUCH AS MEDICINE, AGRICULTURE, OR ENGINEERING). THEY CALL THIS PROFESSIONAL A 'HUMAN SERVICE EDUCATOR'."

THIS PROJECTION SUGGESTS A NEED TO REDIRECT AND BROADEN THE ROLE OF COLLEGES OF EDUCATION. PERHAPS THEY SHOULD BE CALLED "COLLEGES OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL OR HUMAN SERVICES" AND BE CHARGED WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY TO TRAIN "HUMAN SERVICE EDUCATORS" FOR EMPLOYMENT IN A VARIETY OF SETTINGS INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

COLLEGES OF EDUCATION SHOULD CONTINUE TO TRAIN TEACHERS, COUNSELORS, AND ADMINISTRATORS FOR EMPLOYMENT IN SCHOOLS AND

COLLEGES. THEY ALSO SHOULD PREPARE PEOPLE FOR EMPLOYMENT IN GOVERNMENT, SOCIAL WORK, CORRECTIONS, CONSUMER AGENCIES, HOSPITALS AND CLINICS, MENTAL HEALTH AGENCIES, FAMILY COUNSELING CENTERS, AND A WHOLE ARRAY OF SOCIAL AND HUMAN SERVICE YET TO BE IDENTIFIED. MANY OF THESE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES WILL EXIST IN THE PLACE OF GREATEST NEED, OUR URBAN AREAS.

IF COLLEGES OF EDUCATION ARE TO MEET THE CHALLENGES OF AN EMERGING HUMAN SERVICE-ORIENTED SOCIETY, THEY WILL HAVE TO MAKE A COMMITMENT TO A NEW ROLE, BE PREPARED TO MODIFY THEIR CURRICULA TOWARD MULTIDISCIPLINARY FIELD-ORIENTED LEARNING, AND EARNESTLY SEEK A GENUINE PARTNERSHIP NOT ONLY WITH THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS, BUT WITH OTHER HUMAN SERVICE AGENCIES AS WELL.

IN ADDITION TO A COMMITMENT TO TEACHING, LEARNING, AND COMMUNITY SERVICE, COLLEGES OF EDUCATION WILL NEED TO TAKE GREATER RESPONSIBILITY FOR SYSTEMATIC RESEARCH RELATED TO URBAN, SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS. THERE IS A NEED TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT, ITS PEOPLE AND PROBLEMS, AND THE AVENUES FOR SERVING THEM. THROUGH BASIC AND APPLIED RESEARCH, A VIABLE THEORY OF URBAN LIVING AND EDUCATION CAN BE CONSTRUCTED. WITHOUT A SOUND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK, MUCH OF OUR FUTURE EFFORTS ARE LIKELY TO BE SPORADIC AND ONLY marginally VALUABLE.

IN SUMMARY, OUR CITIES, SCHOOLS, AND SOCIAL AGENCIES ARE IN DANGER. THIS TREND CAN BE REVERSED IF OUR URBAN UNIVERSITIES, AND PARTICULARLY THEIR COLLEGES OF EDUCATION, WOULD COMMIT THEMSELVES TO IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF URBAN LIFE AND EDUCATION.

End Notes

¹The Carnegie Commission on Higher Education. The Campus and the City: Maximizing Assets and Liabilities. New York, N. Y.: The McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1972, p. 9.

²The Carnegie Commission on Higher Education. Colleges of the Forgotten Americans: A Profile of State Colleges and Regional Universities. New York, N. Y.: The McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1969, p. 131.

³The Carnegie Commission, op. cit., p. 5.

⁴"High Schools Under Fire." Time, November 14, 1977, pp. 62-75.

⁵Steven Horn, "Opportunities for the Public Urban University," Phi Delta Kappan, September, 1977, pp. 14-15.

⁶Daniel Bell. The Coming of the Post-Industrial Society. New York, N. Y.: Basic Books, 1972.

⁷Alan Gartner and Frank Reissman. The Service Society and the Consumer Vanguard. New York, N. Y.: Harper and Row, 1974.

⁸Robert J. Nash and Edward C. DuCharme, "A Future's Prospective on Preparing Educators for the Human Service Society: How to Restore a Sense of Social Purpose to Teacher Education," Teachers College Record, Vol. 77, No. 4, May, 1976, pp. 441-471.